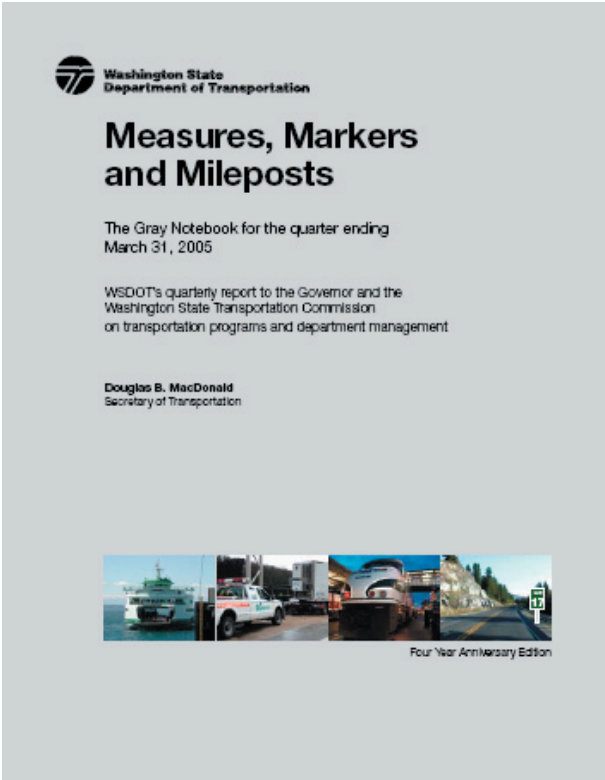


More information

Below is one very big, very valuable performance measurement tool used agency-wide.



Measures, Markers and Mileposts, also called the *Gray Notebook*, provides in-depth reviews of agency and transportation system performance.

The current edition of the *Gray Notebook* can be viewed at:
www.wsdot.wa.gov/accountability

If you have questions or suggestions regarding the *Gray Notebook*, please contact:

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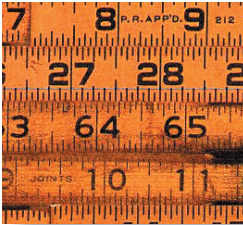
www.wsdot.wa.gov/accountability



A road-cut of geotechnic interest in the North Cascades of Washington State.



A sockeye salmon of culinary interest in a river in the North Cascades of Washington State.



Wild Ideas for Measuring Performance



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How we got started

We, a small group of the most Type-A environmental professionals that Washington State Transportation Secretary Doug MacDonald could get his hands on, were recently asked to think about non-traditional performance measures.

We knew that WSDOT has worked hard in the past to measure performance in many areas, albeit on the traditional side, so the charge to think outside the box was exciting.



To begin, we’ve listed a few examples of performance measures that we’re already using.

Research results on effectiveness of erosion control BMPs

- ▶ Stream turbidity upstream and downstream of construction site
- ▶ Stream pH upstream and downstream of construction site
- ▶ Erosion control audit process, set baseline for '03 annual report

Annual research results on effectiveness of wetland mitigation, wetland replacement

- ▶ Acres of wetland mitigated and mitigation ratio
- ▶ Mitigation sites meeting regulatory requirements for wetland health (still being refined)

Water quality impacts for construction sites

- ▶ Number of water samples in/out of compliance

Number of fish barriers removed

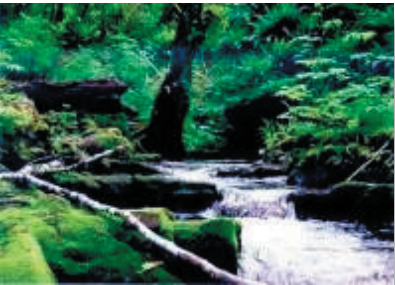
- ▶ By major construction project
- ▶ By retrofit program

Amount of roadside materials recycled

- ▶ Pounds of compost and bio-solids used
- ▶ Volume and percent of aluminum signs recycled



An improved fish passage.



One of our many streams found to have healthy pH levels.

Measures with ‘questionable’ value

As we started out brainstorming non-traditional measures, we thought it a good idea to jot down “traditional” ones for comparison. These are real.

Bean-counting measures:

- ▶ Number of meetings attended
- ▶ Number of pages of NEPA document



What-are-you-talking-about? measures:

- ▶ Was the public involvement program multi-faceted, proactive, responsive and innovative?
- ▶ Were alternatives considered openly and collaboratively with stakeholders?

We-have-no-control-over-these measures:

- ▶ Mobile source emissions
- ▶ Ambient air quality

Way-beyond-us measures:

- ▶ Sustainable use of carbon based fuels
- ▶ Increasing commitment to stewardship and national consensus on sustainable transportation strategies



What we came up with

After spending some time in discussion, we decided that to develop non-traditional performance measures you would have to start with non-traditional goals.

Together we stated some wild, non-attainable, eco-centric goals. These are not the goals of our agency, they just represent some interests of the few of us around the table. We did not worry about whether they were reasonable, actually achievable, or good for the agency. We were trying to stimulate thought, and get ourselves away from thinking in a limited, what-do-we-already-do box.

With the above caveats in mind, here are the goals we used to spark discussion:

1. Make every highway beautiful
2. Gain and keep the public trust
3. Promote human health through promoting physical activity
4. Promote density, prevent sprawl
5. Gain environmental resources by the conclusion of each project



Number of baby peregrine falcons that had to grow up and take flight before a 2005 WSDOT repair project could resume: 2

And using these goals, below are some of the wild, rather non-traditional things we thought we would like to measure.

- The amount of native plants planted in our ROW
- Measure propagation of native plants due to use in ROW
- Miles of densely vegetated/forested ROW
- Evaluate landscapes and how highway fits into it
- The number of road-cuts with geologic interest
- The percentage of folks who understand a project after reading the project’s EIS
- Public satisfaction with a completed project
- The performance of mitigation in non-traditional areas such as sound walls and CSS
- Consistency among state agency actions (complementary efforts far outweigh duplicative or competing efforts)
- The number of attractive, safe, and appealing over-crossings and under-crossings which encourage people to walk across the highways
- The way highways connect to transit centers
- When or whether there are bike/pedestrian paths adjacent to highways
- Connections and access to parks – local, state, national
- Number of highway connections between urban centers
- Number of on- and off-ramps outside of urban areas
- Compare dollars spend with environmental benefit achieved
- Improve water quality
- Reduce peak flow in streams
- Measure greenhouse gas/diesel emissions trends for region and projects
- Do a song bird inventory within one mile of ROW
- Benefits of basin plan implementation
- Number of safe crossing points for wildlife